

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 H-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4677
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

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LUSAKA FOR KEITH MCCORMICK

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, SREF, EAID, WZ
SUBJECT: GOS COMMENT ON USG HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION

REF: MBABANE 1454 (NOTAL)

1. SADAP TEAM MEMBER CHARLES WARD OUTLINED SADAP OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY TO 90-MINUTE MEETING (REPORTED SEPTEL) OF PERMANENT SECRETARIES AND SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS MORNING MAY 5. MEETING WAS CHAIRED BY CABINET SECRETARY BEN NSIBANDZE, WHO ENDED ON SURPRISING NOTE OF COMPLAINING ABOUT USG APPROACHES TO GOS ON SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

2. FOLLOWING HIS BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE MEETING, IN WHICH SUBJECT OF REFUGEES OR DETAINEES DID NOT ARISE, NSIBANDZE NOTED THAT SWAZIS ARE QUIET AND UNDEMOCRATIC AND DO NOT ADVERTISE THEIR PROBLEMS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. HE SAID OTHER COUNTRIES (READ LESOTHO) THAT SHOUT "ON TOP OF THE ROCK" ATTRACT LARGE AMOUNTS OF FOREIGN AID. SWAZILAND, HOWEVER, IS SET UPON BY USG WHICH FIRST PREPARES A REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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IN THE COUNTRY AND THEN THREATENS TO END AID IF SITUATION DOES NOT IMPROVE. SAYING THAT OUTSIDERS HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THE LOCAL SITUATION, HE DEFENDED GOS DETENTIONS AS INVOLVING ONLY "LUNATICS." HE SAID A WASHINGTON VISITOR (UNNAMED) NOT RPT NOT PRESENT IN THE ROOM HAD TOLD HIM THE OTHER NIGHT THAT GOS HAD TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT IMPRESSION IT WAS LEAVING WITH AMERICANS OR THAT IT WOULD FACE AN AID CUT-OFF. CLEARLY PLAYING TO HIS SWAZI COLLEAGUES,

WHO WERE NODDING AGREEMENT, NSIBANDZE SAID THIS APPROACH WAS TURNING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO THE COMMUNIST WORLD. HE ASKED WHETHER WARD WISHED TO COMMENT. GIST OF WARD'S REPLY WAS THAT HUMAN RIGHTS FACTOR IS INDEED ONE OF THE ELEMENTS USG TAKES INTO ACCOUNT IN ITS DELIBERATIONS ON AID. I ADDED THAT EXECUTIVE BRANCH'S ACTION IN THIS FIELD IS MANDATED BY THE CONGRESS.

3. COMMENT: NSIBANDZE'S OUTBURST, ALBEIT CONTROLLED, INDICATES THAT GOS IS STILL SMARTING FROM USG (AND OTHER) ATTENTION TO ITS RECENT ACTION ON REFUGEES AND OTHER DETAINEES. THIS MAY NOT BE ALL BAD. HOWEVER, IT SIGNALS NEED FOR FINE-TUNING OUR APPROACH, ESPECIALLY AFTER GOS' RELEASE OF STUDENT REFUGEES, WHICH IT PROBABLY CONSIDERS MAGNANIMOUS ACT THAT HAS EARNED IT A RESPITE FROM OUTSIDE CRITICISM.

WACHOB

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